

The Catholic Information League

PETER GUILDAY, PH. D.

From a Lecture Published in the Philadelphia "Catholic Standard and Times."

DOWN along the coast of California, from San Francisco's Bay by the side of the crest that stays the waters of the Pacific, across the line that divides the land of Mexico from our own, and then a thousand miles southward to Guatemala, there runs an old highway as historic as the path cut by the caravels of Columbus in the autumn of 1492. You can start out on the old highway from the door of the Mission Dolores Church in the heart of busy San Francisco; you can ride across the plains and the deserts for days and days until you stop at last at the little Church of San Carlos. All along the way you pass the ruined missions, the last living monuments of the noblest attempts in American annals to spread the Faith of Christ. A recent writer has told us that the old highway was never much of a road from the roadmaker's standpoint, but to the historian, the romancer, and the artist, it is one of the most fascinating highways in the world. It did not always stay within the same narrow boundaries. When a tree fell across it, a slight detour was made. When rain fell and water covered it, it branched off to the right or to the left. Short cuts were found as the years moved on, but through the centuries that have passed since the missionaries first traced it like a waving silvery line along the coast, it has remained the King's Highway, the loveliest of all American roads that join the habitations of man. The King's Highway, *El Camino Real*, they called it in the days when Spain governed the Western United States; and today in the center of San Francisco, the old signpost still remains, pointing the way south to rainbow dreams, just as when Father Junipero Serra stood at the door of his little church ringing the mission bells for Holy Mass. They say men traveled that road in Spanish times in quest of gold, in search of the legendary *El Dorado* of the hills; but that is only a shadowy part of *El Camino Real*. The King's

Highway mostly saw foot-weary priests, with loyal Catholic laymen by their side, traveling from mission to mission, not in search of a visionary kingdom where the streets were paved with gold and where the houses were built on golden foundations, but in search of souls to be saved from paganism and savagery, in search of souls to be won to the kingdom of Christ.

El Camino Real, the King's Highway, the only link in this land of ours with the old world—what is it but a symbol of the King's Highway which began at the foot of the Cross on Calvary, and which has found its way, rod by rod, over the whole road? *El Camino Real*, the King's Highway of the Catholic Church—what is it but the royal road of Catholicism, with its unwearied band of travelers—its priests, its religious, its Sisterhoods, its Brotherhoods, its splendid phalanxes of organized Catholic laymen and laywomen, all striving onward and upward, past every obstacle that nineteen centuries of opposition and hatred could invent, enlightening the minds of the children of men with the Divine truth of the Church's message, strengthening their hearts with virtue and righteousness and broadening at every step the horizons of life in order that men and women might lift up their eyes from the dreariness of the earth to the everlasting hills whence comes our unfailing consolation.

From the cradle to the grave, we are all travelers and companions on this royal road, the *Camino Real* of our King and Master Jesus Christ. From His glorious Ascension in heaven down to this very night, that pilgrimage has continued. El Dorado, the land of gold, of plenty, of ease and of luxury does not beckon us on, for every heart that has trod the highway past the nineteen hundred milestones marking its life, has been thrilled with the greatest of all conquests, the conquest of souls. Every year along the royal road has seen its perils for the pilgrims. Every cluster of years, every century, has had its particular dangers to the soldiers of Christ, the priests and the laymen, who are marching gloriously on. And all along that highway, the continuation of the *Via Dolorosa*, the Sorrowful Way that led up to Calvary and beyond, the one persistent peril that has challenged the Church, the evil spirit of paganism—has it not kept pace with the army of

Christ? Skulking along in the shadows, hiding out in the darkness beyond the *Camino Real* of the Catholic Faith, coming now and then into the open, thwarting, blocking, hindering, defeating, decimating Christ's soldiers, the enemy of Christ has been marching, the enemy of civilization, the enemy of an ordered and peaceful world. And that enemy is more alert today than ever. Never before in the history of the Church has the power of paganism been so tremendous. Never before have weapons more subtle been used to call a halt to the Christian pilgrimage across the face of the earth. Never before has the banner carried by the three hundred millions of Catholics, the upraised standard of the Cross, with the Crucified Body of the Master, been so hated and so spurned.

THE LATEST ONSLAUGHT.

Three times in these nineteen hundred years the enemy of Christian civilization has marshaled all its forces in one combined attack against the Lord God of hosts. Twice has it been defeated. Twice has it seemed to the children of the Faith that Antichrist has come at last, and that the rumble of the battleground at Armageddon at last had begun. We of today are witnesses to the third amassing of the forces of evil. To us was the message given in the days of Pius X. to restore all things in Jesus Christ, to call forth into the open the valiant and the true, the faithful and the pure. For we of today are not wrestling against flesh and blood. The streets of our cities are not reddened with the blood of pilgrims as in the past. But we are wrestling against invisible principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of the world, against spiritual wickedness in the highest places. Put ye on the whole armor of God, again the cry is sounding, as Paul cried out to the Christians of Ephesus, put ye on the whole armor of God that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the wicked one, able to stand in all things perfect; girt about with the truth; having on the breastplate of knowledge and of justice; with your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of peace; with the shield of faith; the helmet of salvation; the sword of the Spirit; with lips moving in prayer and supplication at all times; perfect soldiers of Christ, true pilgrims of the King's

Highway must we be, apostles of light and disciples of love, in these our days when the world so badly needs the sweetness and the light of the Christian message.

The opportunity challenging our generation has never been equaled in the past. That opportunity is here. To us it means that the hour of action has come. And by the very circumstances of our position here in America, our Holy Mother, the Church, looks to us, her youngest children in the Faith, not only to be the leaders in all things Catholic, but also to set an example to the other nations of the world. These may seem boastful words, but they contain the message sent to us a year ago by his Holiness, Pope Benedict XV., when our Bishops and Archbishops were gathered in Washington to learn the Holy Father's wishes in our regard. That message did not find us unprepared or unorganized. Look about you in this broad land and count, if you can, the numberless Catholic societies at work, each with its own definite scope of action, each bound to the great tree of the Church by its allegiance and loyalty to the Church's representatives and leaders. The future historian of the Church in this country will find more at his hand to describe than a hundred historians could do. American Catholics are not failing the Church in this great crisis. There are societies and organizations for every member of the Faith, even down to the babe new-born as it lies in its cradle. We have our quota, as every age has had its quota, of those who fall by the wayside on the great pilgrimage, those whose lives are in direct contradiction to the sublime teachings of our Faith, those who are indifferent to the cause of Christ, those who are lukewarm in His service, those who are too cowardly to manifest themselves as true Catholics before the world, those who are a scandal and a stumbling-block to honest inquirers outside the fold. But their numbers are small in comparison with the faithful ranks of those whose support of the Church never falters, of those who with firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence have mutually pledged to each other their lives, their fortunes and their sacred honor in the name of Jesus Christ.

And it is to such a loyal group that a message, an appeal, is to be given tonight. An appeal to the members of a diocese that has always stood gallantly in the front ranks

in its devotion to God, to the Church and to the nation. It is not a new appeal, but one as old as the everlasting hills from whence the pure stream of the Catholic Faith has been flowing throughout the centuries. It is an appeal for co-operation in the noblest work set for the Catholic heart to do—an appeal with all the sublime force of the Church behind it, an appeal with the seal of Christ's words upon it—an appeal for apostleship, for disciplinship, in these our days, that the Kingdom of God may not be exiled from the earth, an appeal for your adhesion, your membership, in a league which means to carry the message of the Gospel, the story of the Church and the lessons of the past to the hearts of those who are not yet sealed with the chrism of adoption in the great army of God in the United States.

THE LAY APOSTOLATE.

There have been Catholic Information Leagues from the very beginning of Christianity. The little band of chosen Apostles, who began the long journey of the Church down Christ's *Camino Real* were not alone. Side by side with them marched valiant men and women whom they baptized. Through the centuries, never has the layman or the laywoman been absent. We can look back across the past, we can study their methods, study their system of bringing Christ's message home to the pagans of the Roman Empire; we can watch the growth of the Church down through those middle centuries on into our own times, and everywhere, at all times, we see the method to be the same. Nothing new need be created, nothing novel need be used. The old methods are consecrated by long usage; they have been tried in hundreds of different situations and under thousands of different circumstances, but they essentially remain the same. The Catholic method in use today is Christ's method of old, and it can be described in a word: going, therefore, teach. To teach, one must first be informed. To teach, one must have the call, the inspiration to teach. To teach requires organization, for none can teach who is not sent. To teach requires more than information, inspiration and organization; it requires above all direction. But above and beyond direction, beyond organization and inspiration, stands the greatest essential factor in the Catholic lay apostolate, and that factor is information.

"My people have been silent," says the Prophet Osee, "because they had no knowledge." Knowledge must precede love. Without knowledge we are like soldiers in a battle without weapons. And the knowledge we are required to possess is knowledge easy to obtain. It is useless for us to know that our Faith is attacked unless we know how and why it is attacked. It is fatal for us to defend the Church unless we know how and why the Church is maligned. To go from this gathering tonight with only the message that our Holy Church is now engaged upon a third gigantic world-struggle for the life of her children, and not to know that this third phase is but an echo of the past is to depart useless and unarmed. The Church has no new enemy today. The Church is fighting a force as old as humanity, as old as original sin, and when names are given to that force, names like "materialism" and "paganism," it is hopeless for any Catholic to imagine that these are abstract and intangible enemies, enemies too subtle, too strong for the rank and file, enemies against which only the trained philosopher and theologian is fitted to cope. Materialism and paganism have their theologians and philosophers, as they have always had them; but they have their appeal to the rank and file today, as they have always had them. Paganism's appeal by those three broad avenues that lead to the public mind and heart, the school, the press, and the stage, is an appeal not to the learned, but to the poor and lowly, to those who are clustered around the standard of the Cross, to those whose very simplicity make them the most formidable foes of all that spells the beast in humanity. The fight is not only on the hilltops, out of sight of the crowds in the valleys below, but it is down on the plains, down among the toilers and workers, and unless the toiler and the worker know, the fight is partly lost to us, the fight is partly won by them. To prepare the lowly and uneducated, to form a rallying place for the learned, for the leader in both sanctuary and church—that is the primal object of a League of Catholic Information. Its purpose is to fill the hearts of our own with courage, with the courage and the power that knowledge best of all can bring, and to prepare those hearts to carry the message of God's love and goodness to their fellow-men in the world about them.

It is a peculiarly American method of attack—to strike a man through his past. Principles may be fought out, plans and platforms may be hotly discussed here in America with us, but in the heat of the fight, the cloak of charity is only too often torn aside, and the past is searched for things that tell against the present. In the same way, here in America, the quarrel against Catholicism is peculiarly one with Catholicism's past. And we possess courage in proportion as we possess the knowledge that the historical antagonisms to the Church are as old as Paganism's sworn hatred of Christianity. Certain principles may easily be formulated as resultant effects of nineteen hundred years of strife against the Church. Broadly speaking those may be given as follows:

No attack on the Church, no objection against Catholic doctrine, no objection taken from the history of the Church is new. They are all as old as the book written against the Church by the pagan philosopher, Celsus, in the second century.

No objection against the Faith, no objection taken from history, hoary as every objection is with age, can stand the test. They all proceed from two evil spirits: prejudice and ignorance.

To dispel ignorance, to overcome prejudice, the Church runs only one risk: To be defended by ignorant or prejudiced Catholics. Only the truth can make the Catholic free to enter the lists.

It is information, therefore, that is needed. We must know not only the doctrines of the Faith, but we must know where the enemy stands, whence his opposition to the Church proceeds and why he stands in the battle against us. And it is not left to the Catholic to choose between ignorance and knowledge. Not to know in the abstract that materialism is arrayed against the Faith, but to know every phase of the materialistic, the pagan advance. He must be able to estimate the intellectual error of materialism, which leads to infidelity. He must be able to answer the petty objections the Church is weary with answering over and over the past 1900 years. He must know why 60,000,000 Americans have forgotten the day devoted to God. He must know the reason for the social plague materialism has created, the social plague of divorce which makes us the

shame of the civilized world, the plague that is breaking up the units which hold the nation together. He must know in all its details the economic menace of materialism which men call wildly and loosely Socialism, that Socialism which is wise enough to recognize in the Catholic Church its only potent enemy. He must see in the very midst of our international attempt to bring the world together in the bonds of peace, through a league, the political abyss that materialism is opening between the governed and the governing in every land, the abyss of anarchy or Bolshevism. There is no choice to the Catholic. The third period of world conquest is upon us. We are in it and of it. No man can hide away from it. No home is so secluded that the strife cannot enter. It is a far greater world war than that from which the nations have just emerged with 15,000,000 victims on the field of battle. The kingdom of evil is arrayed a third time, as it was under the Caesars during the first three centuries, as it was under the barbarians from the fifth to the tenth centuries, arrayed a third time against the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

We need no other inspiration for the great work but Our Blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, dying on the Cross, for the redemption of mankind. We are His soldiers, His soldiers by the waters of Baptism; His soldiers by the perfecting chrism of Confirmation. Our knowledge of the past will give us the force and the strength to give our all for the struggle. We are living in an age when apathy means defeat, when indifference is crime, when cowardice cries to heaven for vengeance. It is an age of violence, and we must do violence to ourselves, for only the violent will carry the Kingdom of Heaven away in their hearts. To fight for Jesus Christ is the sublimest call God can give to the human heart. But to fight for Christ, we must first destroy all self-seeking, all trace of the kingdom of evil within us. We cannot enter the lists, with the treason of sin in our hearts, and the cry of the Kingdom of God on our hypocritical lips. To fight for Christ, we must be ready for every sacrifice, ready for every demand. To fight for Christ, we must start up from our knees, where we were in prayer. To fight for Christ, we must be exemplars of the virtues of Christ in His

meekness, His humility, His obedience, His benignity, His Divine charity and love for His fellow-men. To fight for Christ, we must be willing to be led, led by our superiors, led in the serried ranks of an organized company, led in the strict school of discipline, led by those whom our Holy Mother has placed over us.

LEARN FROM THE ENEMY.

Look along the battle lines. The ranks are fast closing in. Arrayed against the forces of the Christian Faith are numbers beyond count. Every kind of enemy is visible. Every kind of traitor from our own ranks is there to be seen. And on our side, on the side of Christianity, stand two divisions of men; the one, the hundreds of millions of Catholic hearts, and the other, the paltry number of loyal souls left to Protestantism. Measure the armies on both sides, and what stands out foremost in each: It is organization. On the anti-Christian side you find organization of every instrument of human power and influence that can be used against Christ and the Church. There is no lack of zeal. There is no lack of determination. There is no quarreling among themselves, no criticism of leaders, no childish sentiment of being asked to do too much for the cause. There is no striving for place, no attempt at circumventing this leader or that. All are satisfied, from the highest to the lowliest, because every one has a part to do in the work that lies closest to his heart—to drive Jesus Christ from the face of His Father's world. "*Fas est et ab hoste doceri*": It is but right to learn from the enemy. Our organization will be of no appreciable value unless it possess the loyalty of every Catholic heart, for only by organization can we succeed in stemming the tide of paganism in the world. And organization implies a further factor, direction.

Our chief director in all things is the Vicar of Christ, the Visible Head of the Church on earth, Pope Benedict XV. Our immediate superior is his Grace, the Archbishop, whom may Almighty God long leave to us. Under his care and direction, this splendid diocese of ours is enjoying the renaissance of all that spells in large letters Catholic life and Catholic thought, Catholic doctrine and Catholic activity. But the burden of defending Christ's

Vineyard here does not rest on him and upon his devoted priests alone. It rests on all of us. He is our chief leader. His priests are our guides. They know the battle line in all its phases. History tells them beforehand every move of the enemy. From them we receive our direction, and from those they place over the various societies and organizations of the diocese we receive their message, their guidance and their advice. They have surrounded our Catholic life here with every possible sort of an organization for the protection of the Faith that is in us, and for the full-flowering of that spirituality of which we all are capable. In all else, apart from faith and morals, apart from our doctrines and our discipline, they leave us free to choose from among the many societies with which the diocese is blessed, those which have an attraction for us and in which we feel we can be helped. But all these societies and organizations are for ourselves, for our own spiritual life and progress. Tonight our attention is centered upon something different. We are asked to give our support to a society which looks beyond the stained-glass windows of our churches out into the world around us, an organization which is destined, with God's blessing and grace, to reach the hearts of those who see these same stained-glass windows from the outside, and who cannot see the beauty of the Faith within; a league for the purpose of carrying to our fellow-citizens here in Philadelphia exact and adequate information about our Faith. It is not a league of conversion. It does not set out to make the city Catholic. It does not intend to do the work assigned to our clergy. It does not intend to tamper with the faith of any one outside the Church. But it does set out to batter down the prejudice and the ignorance which keep Catholics and non-Catholics apart in civic things. It determines to brush away suspicions, doubts, misgivings and distrust. It means to drive through the heart of this city a road leading straight to the King's Highway, the *Camino Real* of Christ, so that pilgrims who are seeking it and seeking us, other pilgrims along the way, may not be led astray by falsehood or by bigotry. The Catholic Information League is a reality. It is approved by our leaders. It is organized under an efficient and devoted body of lay people and of priests. It is inspired by the highest ideal in the

land, the desire to see Christ Jesus praised, adored and loved by every citizen of this city. The workers are ready. The work is at hand. It is yours to say to them yea or nay. It is yours to do for Philadelphia what has been done elsewhere so nobly and so efficiently. And it is yours to accept again the message the Prophet Isaias once gave to the people of Jerusalem:

"Upon thy walls, O Jerusalem, I have appointed watchmen all the day and all the night; they shall never hold their peace. You that are mindful of the Lord, hold not your peace. And give the Lord no silence until He establish and till He make Jerusalem a praise in the earth. Go through, go through the gates, prepare the way for the people; make the road plain; pick out the stones, and lift up the standard to the people. And then thou shalt be: A city sought after, and not forsaken."

Conduct and Influence

ERNEST R. HULL, S.J.

From the Bombay "Examiner."

SOME one has said: "Tell me what a man is and I will tell you what he does." But there is a more obvious truth in saying: "Tell me what a man does, and I will tell you what he is." When Our Lord said, "It is not what goeth into a man, but what cometh out, that defileth the man," He expressed the philosophical idea that what a man does is the outcome of what he is. But at the same time there is a fallacy about external action which has to be guarded against.

From a spiritual point of view the interior is the essential criterion of a man's state; and external action is valued precisely so far as it springs from the interior spirit. "If I speak with the tongues of angels and of men; if I dispense all my goods to the poor; if I give my body to be burned, *and have not charity*, it profiteth me nothing." If actions are bad, there is of course nothing to be said about them; and no interior motive or intention can make up for their viciousness. On the other hand, if my actions are good, it is not sufficient that they should be such objec-

tively. They must also be good in their intention or motive, otherwise they do not count as virtuous. If my actions are of the merely colorless or innocent order, nothing can be objected against them; but their moral value is *nil* unless they have some virtuous intention at the back.

All this is the commonplace of moral theology, and would not need to be enlarged upon if it were not that a whole world of self-deception can be bound up with external activity. People will pour themselves out over certain good actions which they have a personal liking for; and in some ways they are really doing God's service. But there stands written against them on the page of the Gospel that terrifying utterance: "He who is guilty in one point is guilty in all." Hidden in the background there lurks some mastering passion or vice of the positive order, or some neglect or omission of duty of the negative order, which poisons the roots of the whole spiritual life, and puts a man fundamentally in the wrong with God, even though there is much on the surface which looks meritorious. It really seems to suggest a bad tree bringing forth good fruit, or thistles bearing figs. And just for that reason people will deceive themselves into thinking that on account of their good external activities all is well with them, when at the core there is rottenness and decay: "*Bonum ex integra causa; malum ex quocumque defectu.*"

We can pass over this somewhat dismal aspect of the subject and assume that the interior spirit and the foundations of a right life are solidly laid. Then secondly, we may assume there is no question of actions which are morally wrong or manifestly irrational. Having thus cleared the ground we can take for granted the previous philosophies of facts and principles, and pass on to the third and completing philosophy of action; that is, of doing things in accordance with facts and principles already presupposed.

If we try to divide humanity into water-tight compartments as a set of clearly defined types, we shall have to begin with the division into men who *think*, men who *talk* and men who *act*. Of course in real life the division is not clean-cut. Everybody must think to some extent, talk to some extent, and act to some extent. But we come across people whose thinking powers are well developed, but who

for the most part keep their thinking to themselves. This does not mean that their thinking is fruitless. It is sure to translate itself into talk to some extent, and also into action; and the value of the talk and the action will be enhanced by the quality of thought which lies at the back of it.

UNOBTRUSIVE INFLUENCE.

One occasionally comes across characters who are remarkable for their unobtrusiveness. They say very little and (beyond their routine duties) do very little; and yet they may be really great centers and sources of influence (unconscious for the most part) on their whole surroundings. They create a kind of atmosphere which is absorbed by those around them, and their mere presence in a company seems to give a kind of tone to it. People who otherwise might misbehave themselves in various ways, will feel an instinct of self-restraint when *so and so* is in the room. The person in question somehow or other preaches good behavior to others by his own good behavior, which makes a breach of manners in his presence a sort of desecration. The uncouth individual, when under this subtle spell, will feel self-conscious about his own crudities, just as a blundering musician would feel his own false notes in a well-tuned orchestra.

In this way, taciturn men of exceptional qualities can leaven their whole surroundings, and raise the environment to a higher plane, merely by the fact of themselves being there. They speak without words, and act without movements, and do tremendous things *merely by being what they are*.

In the spiritual life this silent and sub-conscious influence is still more marked. I am sure that the presence of an Aloysius or a Stanislaus or a Berchmans in a community must have had untold effects on the general tone and standard of that community, quite apart from the specific example of their talk or action. The idea is naively illustrated in the life of St. Francis of Assisi, who one day said to a disciple: "Let us go out and preach." The disciple came along, and the twain of them walked round the town in silence and worked their way back to the monastery. Then the disciple was surprised, and said: "I thought we were going to preach." "Brother," replied

St. Francis, "We have been preaching all the time by our modesty and recollection."

Such silent sources of influence need not of course be *deep* or original thinkers, but it is safe to say that unless a man has got a thinking mind at the back of his outward demeanor he cannot possibly produce such effects. Without that thinking mind the man would be a dummy, and would have no more influence than a Dutch doll. His composed and tranquil exterior must be something projective and not something merely supine, otherwise there would never emanate from it that "magnetism"—for want of a better name—which issues in such a dynamic effect.

Going back to our Great Exemplar I think we all feel much more influence in Christ's personality than can be summed up in the words He said or the deeds He performed. Behind all that lies something far more subtle, far less capable of analysis, which is the real Christ—the goal of our aspirations and the stimulation of our endeavors. It is the personality or character at the back of words and actions which gives to both their living force, and produces in us effects far deeper and more moving than anything which we externally see or hear.

Pious people often make use of the influence of "simple presence" when they cultivate the presence of God or of the Saints or Angels. "Thou God seest me" was one of the illuminated mottoes which hung in my bedroom when a child. The lesson it meant to convey was that God is always looking on, and I must never do anything which I should be afraid for Him to see. The same advice is given to Catholic children: "Remember your Guardian Angel is looking at you"; and parents will say to their young daughters: "Always behave with a young man as if you were in the presence of your mother," and so on. Even in the trivialities of ordinary life the same stimulating effect of a presence is felt. A youth is learning the bicycle on a lonely road, and wobbles about horribly. As soon as he sees some stranger approaching he braces himself up, and strains every nerve to cut a dignified figure by riding straight. St. Paul makes the same appeal when he tells us we are "spectacles to the world, to angels and to men."

LINES OF ACTIVITY.

Man is a being of limited energy. I have only come across one man who ever disputed this; and he did so because he thought people made this maxim an excuse for not doing things which they could easily do if they tried. I confess I sympathized with his objection, because—to put it paradoxically—it is *wonderful how much more people can do than they think they can do if they can only get themselves to think they can do it*. It is often the busiest men that find the most time to do things in. They never refuse to undertake an additional job, or excuse themselves from undertaking it because they are “so busy.” They manage to go through the additional job in no time, and their other work does not seem to suffer by it. The real secret of this is that *they never waste time by putting things off*. They make straight for what is before them *hic et nunc*, and get through it in less time than they would take in thinking whether they have time to do it or not. Then they go on straight with the next thing without wasting time in gaps or intervals of hesitation.

But even such men of seemingly unlimited energy have their limit somewhere. They may find time for ten extra jobs, but they could not find time for fifty. There comes a point in which it is physically impossible to get the work into the time without omitting part of it, or scamping part of it, or turning the work out rough and unpolished.

Now as soon as a man begins to look upon life as a serious affair, and as a space of time to get as much work as possible into, he will always have to take into account the principle of limitation, and as a corollary, the principles of selection and economy—selection, that is, what things to take up and what to leave alone; and economy, that is, the art of securing the highest proportion between results and efforts.

Herr Schneebels was often consulted by the students as to the lines of enterprise they should take up; and out of his advice on different occasions one could gather quite a nice little list of general maxims which look commonplace enough when stated, but would, if observed, save a vast amount of wasted and misdirected energy.

His first maxim was: *Concentrate on the things you can do, and leave alone the things you can't do*. One comes

across pathetic instances of people who have no more talent for music than my old shoe (the only thing an old shoe can do in the way of music is either to creak or to clatter); and yet they conceive an ambition in the musical line, and will make painful efforts to sing, or play, or even to compose, with results highly stimulating to themselves but dismal to those around. There are young men who aspire to be poets, and feel their bosoms swelling and heaving with what seem to them the sublimest inspirations, but have not the least idea of the bathos of their effusions. Others will strive to shine as conversationalists, the result of which is nothing but boredom elevated into a fine art. Youths will conceive a passion for some profession entirely unsuited for them, and will work at it with grotesque futility; and lucky they, if their mistake is found out in time. Blessed therefore is the man who has sufficient objectivity of view to take a sound measure of his own talents, and to distinguish between the things he can do and the things he cannot do, early enough to direct his energies into sound lines instead of dooming his life to failure from the very beginning.

MAKING A DIFFERENCE.

The second maxim of Herr Schneebels was: *Concentrate on things that are worth the while, things which issue in results proportional to the energy and time devoted to them.* Mind (he would add quickly) I have nothing to say against unproductive hobbies adopted simply for amusement or relaxation. Let a young man take to butterflies, or beetles, or postage stamps, or autographs, or old china, or collecting walking-sticks or trouser-buttons, merely for the fun of the thing, if he finds in it a relief and a relaxation—provided the hobby is really kept in its place as such, and is not made a substitute for serious work, or a drain of energy needed for serious work.

A third maxim was as follows: *"Concentrate on things which you can make a difference to, and leave aside those you can make no difference to."* Herr Schneebels once brought this maxim out when we twitted him on not reading the papers during the Boer war (about 1900 if I remember aright). "Why," he asked, "should I spend any time on reading about the war, seeing that I cannot make the slightest difference to it?"

He was immediately attacked from all sides. One student said: "At least it gives us something to talk about? To which Herr Schneebels replied: "I confess I never find any need of going to the daily paper to find things to talk about."

Another student urged: "But at least people expect you to follow current events, and look upon you as a fossil if you don't." Herr Schneebels replied: "I find it impossible to *avoid* following current events, without even looking at a newspaper. If there is anything going on, the people around are sure to tell me all about it before the day is out." He added "Don't imagine, however, that I blame other people in this matter, provided they do not make the daily paper a substitute for their serious life-work, or expend time and energy over it which could be much better devoted to more serious employments."

A third student attacked the professor in another and bolder way: "According to your maxim we ought not to study theology; for if there is any subject under the sun which *we can make no difference* to, it is theology!"

This sounded so smart that we expected to find Herr Schneebels cornered. However, he answered by a retort: "I suppose at least you will admit that theology can make a great deal of difference *to you*." "Agreed" said the student, "but that does not mean making any difference *to it*."

"Not so fast. Theology is a dead thing so long as it remains in books. It is a wonderfully lively thing as soon as it gets into your head. Therefore, by studying theology you can make an immense difference to theology—you can make it pass from a latent into an active state. Theology in your mind makes an immense difference to your mind. It makes you a qualified exponent of divine truth. It enables you to impart divine truth to other minds. Here again you make an immense difference to theology, for you change it from a static into a dynamic thing, and use it as an instrument for making a difference to other people—to all with whom you have a chance of using your theological knowledge."

"However your rather smart criticism has served to improve my maxim: *Concentrate upon those things which you can make a difference to, and also on those things which will help you in making this difference.*"

I might also put the same idea in another way. Some author has summed up the proper ambition of a man in these terms: "Let the world be the better for your having lived in it." Now we can divide the world (in this connection) into persons and things, and so our vocation in life will consist in making persons better, and making things better. The world is chiefly bettered by having better people in it; quite secondary is the question of better things. Now the first and most immediate person whom I can make a difference to is myself; for over myself I have infinitely more control than over other people. The first and most immediate field of action is, therefore, to try and make a difference to myself—a difference in the way of improvement; first spiritually and morally, and afterwards culturally and socially.

St. Jerome's Fifteenth Centenary

The "Osservatore Romano's" Summary of the Holy Father's Encyclical.

AMONG the Saints who have adorned the Catholic Church not only with the heroism of virtue but also with the splendor of doctrine, St. Jerome must surely take a foremost place. Saint in many ways, ascetic, penitent and doctor, he was raised by God to interpret the Sacred Scriptures. On the fifteenth centenary of his death the August Pontiff has drawn a picture of his merits in an Encyclical, with the particular object of teaching the great precepts regarding the study of Sacred Scripture contained in the immortal Encyclical *Providentissimus Deus* of Leo XIII.

He treats first of all the life of the great Doctor, who was born at Stridone in Dalmatia, baptized in Rome, and consecrated the whole of his long life to the study and explanation of the Bible. While still young, having hardly learned Greek and Latin, he set himself to interpret the prophet Abdias, and so great was his enthusiasm in this first effort in exegesis that he determined to give up everything and go to the East to complete his Biblical studies in the very place sanctified by the Divine Redeemer. There, while giving himself up at the same time to the strictest

penitence and the closest study, he left nothing undone in his attempt at progress in sacred doctrine.

He himself tells us that he was a pupil of Apollinaris of Laodicea in Syria and that he learned Hebrew and Chaldean from a convert Jew in the desert of Syria. For three years he was at Constantinople at the School of St. Gregory Nazianzen; then he returned to Rome, where he was of great service to Pope Damascus in the affairs of the Church.

But here, too, in spite of the great work of his new office, St. Jerome never gave up his chosen studies, and being charged by the Pontiff to correct the Latin version of the New Testament he carried out the work so well that it is the admiration of the learned even today. But he always looked towards the Holy Places, and as soon as Pope Damascus died he made his way to Bethlehem, and having built a refuge near the Presepium of Oristos, he gave himself up entirely to prayer and the Sacred Scripture. Still he did not consider he was sufficiently prepared in the knowledge of Scripture, and he wandered through Palestine in search of masters and texts to consult. It was thus that, while enriching his mind with new knowledge, he could carry out that immense labor of Scriptural exegesis and polemics which stamps him the Doctor of the Sacred Scriptures given by Providence.

TRUTH OF HOLY SCRIPTURE.

Having thus summed up the life of St. Jerome, the Sovereign Pontiff goes on to consider his teaching on the Divine dignity and the absolute truthfulness of the Bible. He says that from all the writings of the Doctor it is clear that he held firmly with the Catholic Church that the Sacred Books, written under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, have God for their Author, and as such, have been given to the Church itself. The Holy Father confirms this with many instances taken from the numerous works of St. Jerome, particularly those against heretics. Together with this teaching of St. Jerome are illustrated the solemn declarations of Leo XIII. on the absolute immunity of the Sacred Scriptures from error. The Pope then goes on to lament the levity and the pride of those who openly repudiate the infallible magisterium of the Church on this point, or underhandedly combat it. He approves indeed

the zeal of those who give themselves to the study of texts and the varied researches in science and wise criticism in order to overcome difficulties, but he deplotes the conduct of such as fall from the right path through neglect of the teaching of Leo XIII. and the Fathers. He calls special attention to the objections arising from the sciences, physical and historical, to conclude that the inspiration of Scripture cannot be limited to any particular part of it, nor can a double truth in it, absolute and relative, be admitted. Then he urges that in the seminaries and schools an exact conception is given of that inspiration as it has been handed down, not only by the Popes and Fathers, but by Christ Himself.

His Holiness enjoins on all, on the lines traced by St. Jerome, the reading and study of the Sacred Scripture, wherein is to be found the food for the spiritual life and the guide to the heights of Christian perfection. To such as devote themselves to explanation and teaching of the Bible he points out that the duty of all who thus comment is to put forth not their own opinion but that which was intended by the author; for it is a terrible danger if by false interpretation of the Gospel of Christ the gospel of a man should be propounded. Better than the flower of oratory is sound learning and the candor of truth.

The Pope concludes that fifteen hundred years after his death St. Jerome is more than ever living, that his voice resounds wonderfully from his works. His Holiness proclaims the importance, the integrity and the historical authority of the Scriptures; he speaks of the great benefits to be derived from careful reading of them, urges a return to the practice of the Christian life, repeats once more the warning that the See of Peter, especially as a result of the piety and love of the Italians in whose land it was Divinely established, must be held in such honor, and must enjoy such liberty, as is absolutely required by the dignity and the very exercise of the Apostolic Office. The Holy Father prays, too, that those Christian peoples who are unhappily separated from the Mother Church, specially the well-beloved Orientals, may return anew to her in whom alone is all hope of eternal salvation.